

Andrew Jackson to John Randolph, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

TO JOHN RANDOLPH.

Hermitage, February 20, 1810

Sir. I should have adressed you some weeks ago, had I heard, that your health had permitted you to take your seat in congress. I now hope this will find you in your seat It is highly probable from what is stated in the public prints, that an inquiry may be had into the conduct of Genl Don James Wilkison. Should this be the case I think it a duty I owe myself and country, that it may be known; where testimony exist, in the hand writing of the genl, that may throw some light upon the inquiry. This (as I am advised) is a lengthy corespondence had and held between the Genl and Mr Laca[s]sang[e] formerly Postmaster at the fall of the ohio. The letter from Obediah B. Hays Esqr which you will receive by this mail, will give you the channel through which I obtained my information. The Publick I think will be much indebted to him. The inclosed coopy of a letter, will shew you in whose hands the corespondence are, and when you are informed, that my letter to which the inclosed is an answer stated, that "I was informed; the corespondance would establish the genls being a Pensioner of Spain—who were concerned and the object of the conspiracy the severance of the western from the Eastern states etc. etc." you will perceive from the answer that these papers prove *much* . I have no doubt from the information I have recd. from Mr Hays that they will prove more than I anticipated.

It is to be regretted that the arm of Govt. has been stretched forth to shield this *publick* villain, from that just publick punishment that he merits. It has appeared to me that the clouds of testimony of his guilt thickened around him. the more the respectability of his

Library of Congress

accusers; the more the favours of government were heaped upon him, and by this means inquiry crushed, and truth intimidated and from the inclosed you will see, that this object has been attained. for I believe Capt O Allen a man of firmness, and a Patriot, and with what solicitude he writes, and expresses himself on the occasion. The Publick mind is now calm, This villain of corruption and iniquity must be draged from his lurking place, and unmasked to the world. The stain that the goverment of our country has reed by having such a charector at the head of our army must be washed out by a Just and publick punishment, and I fear that there is not a man on the floor of congress that has firmness and independance anough, to bring forward to the bar of Justice this *once favorite* of *presidential* care: but yourself. I therefore write you, and inclose information in whose hands this precious corespondance between the Genl and Mr Laca[s]sang[e] can be found. I have to request that the inclosed will not be made publick untill It is necessary. you will see with what caution he confines me to the use of his letter. as to my letter you may use it as you please. where villainy is concerned I have no secretes. I neither fear the frowns, nor court the smiles of *Genl Wilkison and his friends, however influential the [y] may be* . I have sent a coopy of the inclosed letter to Mr Jenkin Whiteside of the Senate with a request that he shews it to the President—That he may take early measures for the preservation of this correspondanc[e]. Should he *not act* so as to procure them; I write this to you, that measures may be adopted; that this corespondence may be obtained, and laid before the publick.

The subject of this letter I hope will be a sufficient apology for my intruding it upon you. The matter it contains induces me to write you. our verry slight acquaintanc[e] I know would not warrent me in opening a corespondance, but the subject requires a man of talents and firmness on the floor of congress, and for this reason I intrust the subject to your hands. I am Sir with high regard for your charector yr. mo. ob. serv.

P S. Capt. O Allen was raised in or near Petersburg has been well recommended to me. It is likely you are personally acquainted with him, when I first knew him it was in Richmond in 1807, he was then the open supporter of Wilkison—and I believe from

Library of Congress

a sincere belief of his merit. he came to the western country in the fall of that year. these papers fell into his hands which has verified to him that the Genl was just such a composition of corruption as I had assured him he would find him to be upon inquiry and investigation. From the small acquaintance I have with Capt. O Allen, I have I [sic] high confidence in his integrity and probity, and he is thus considered by all his new acquaintances in the west that I have heard speak of him.